

READING

Part 1

Read the text and complete the tasks that follow. Choose a, b, or c. Put a circle round the most appropriate answer. An example is done for you.

It happened at night

Tom woke suddenly. Feeling the floor moving under his bed and hearing the sound of breaking glass, he knew he had to get out of his old house as quickly as was humanly possible. He soon had his dressing gown back on, found his slippers and made for the door. When this had last happened, he'd had others to worry about, too. Mary had since gone to a better place where no ground ever shook. On the other side of town, their only son, Tom junior, would now be gathering his wife, son and daughter and other valuables. No doubt he would want to save what he could if it turned out to be a big one. Reminiscences were a luxury he couldn't afford at that instant but the thought did occur to the old man that the son to whom he had given so much would not now be thinking of him.

The cold of the night, once he was out in the relative safety of the open street, made Tom wish he had planned his escape more calmly. If he had only stopped to think he would have recalled that the weathermen had forecast a clear sky with temperatures well below the seasonal average. And why hadn't he opened the wardrobe where his heavy overcoat now hung uselessly? Mary would have. These thoughts, though, were interrupted by a second, more violent tremor, which shook the street in anger. No sooner had it passed than Tom found himself surrounded by equally frightened neighbours who normally

would not even have said hello to him. Sad, lonely thoughts returned. Nothing like the threat of a natural disaster, Tom complained to himself, to bring people together!

Dawn broke eventually. By the light of the rising sun, it appeared that the buildings in Tom's street had suffered no structural damage at all. Strangely enough, he was more contented than he had been in years. A family in the flats next door had befriended him. He now stood chatting to the youngster who had lent him the warm leather jacket which he had put on over his dressing gown. The boy's mum had somehow made hot soup for them all and they had drunk out of mugs, standing around a fire that dad had lit in the middle of the road. The news that reached them from a group crowded around a car with its radio on was good; apparently no further major tremors were expected. The earthquake's epicentre had been under the sea two hundred kilometres away. It was safe to go back indoors.

Tom wondered whether others might not have been so lucky. He vowed to return the kindness he had been shown. What is more, he would stop feeling bitterly sorry for himself. From now on, he would swallow his pride and give Tom junior the chance to help him out now and again. All it would take was one phone call.

Example: Why did Tom wake up so suddenly?

- a) The floor was moving.
- b) He had nightmares.
- c) He was thinking of his son.

Total: 6 marks

1. What can be understood about the man in this story?
 - a) He had been living alone after his wife's death.
 - b) His son had treated him unkindly.
 - c) He had only recently become divorced.
2. The earthquake
 - a) caused no real damage.
 - b) started a fire in the man's street.
 - c) was felt over a small area only.
3. We can suppose that Tom's neighbours before the earthquake
 - a) had drawn the conclusion that he wanted to be left alone.
 - b) disapproved of the way he treated his wife and children.
 - c) were jealous of him because he lived in a house, not a flat.
4. Tom's attitude to himself and others
 - a) was altered by his experiences that night.
 - b) was left unchanged by the earthquake.
 - c) worsened and became more bitter after the earthquake.
5. This story shows that
 - a) old people should be cared for by their children.
 - b) children can be ungrateful towards their parents.
 - c) people are sometimes responsible for their own unhappiness.
6. Which one of the following did Tom most probably do first, later that day?
 - a) buy a new leather jacket for the boy next door
 - b) get in touch with a close relative of his
 - c) invite his friendly neighbours to dinner to show his thanks